المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

Welcome Address by Salem Azzam, Secretary General, Islamic Council, to the International Islamic Conference, London Arena, 6 August 1995

Brother Chairman, Honoured brother Professor Ghulam Azam, brothers and sisters,

Assalaam Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu

We are here today to honour our respected guest, the great Muslim thinker and mujahid, Professor Ghulam Azam. Professor Azam has fought all his life for his beliefs and for his faith and his struggle has seen him face years of harassment, imprisonment, exile and persecution. But he never wavered. And under his leadership the Jamaat-e-Islami in Bangladesh has become a force to be reckoned with. He is a shining example to all and we are honoured indeed, and delighted, to have him with us today.

Brothers and sisters,

Our meeting today, at which are gathered many from various segments of the Muslim Ummah to welcome Professor Azam, is a fine example of the unity of ranks and the unity of purpose which reflects the unity of the Muslim Ummah. This small example which we are demonstrating in this meeting leads me to talk briefly about the necessity and the inevitability of the unification of the Ummah. The jihad of Muslims in this era must be directed towards achieving two goals, which would lead and direct Islamic endeavour: the reunification of the Ummah and the establishment of an Islamic order to embody this unity.

Without unity there can be no Ummah; and without an order that implements Islam , its ideology, its programmes and actions, there can be no true unification for this Ummah which Allah had decreed should be united through Islam and through no means other than Islam.

Unity will pool the resources of the Ummah, will concentrate its strength and direct it against its enemies.

Division into nation states, on the other hand, wastes the energies of the Ummah, saps its strength and directs its efforts towards in-fighting. The lessons of Islamic history are crystal clear: victory has always been the fruit of unity and defeat has always been the fruit of disunity.

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Brothers and sisters,

The reality of Muslims today does not embody the existence of an Ummah. On the contrary, it embodies the absence of an Ummah. The degree to which we can talk of a Muslim awakening is dependent on the degree to which members of Islamic movements recognise the reality that the Ummah is absent and the degree to which they work to unite the forces of Muslims under the banner of the Qur'an. This is what we need at this hour of Islamic history.

There is a consensus among Muslims for unity in a single Ummah. Our Muslim world contains within it enough human and material resources to make it a major world power. Unity therefore is the only option open to Muslims. Through unity Muslims can emerge from their current state of weakness, subservience and reliance. Our Ummah first found righteousness under the banner of the Qur'an and our Ummah must now return to unity under the banner of the Qur'an. Muslims have no other choice but unity because of our religious obligation and because of the lessons of our history. Moreover, it is a choice forced upon us by the developments in the world around us.

Brothers and sisters,

The will to live which Allah has given us and the energy of our faith with which He has endowed us, along with our trust in Allah's promise that He will protect His religion, empower the Ummah which carries His message, and leaves us optimistic, not pessimistic. And there is no other goal worthy of inspiring us at this stage than that of unity, and there is no goal which is more inspiring of our jihad than unity.

Brother Chairman, Honoured brother Professor Azam, brothers and sisters,

The cooperation of Muslims in order to achieve unity is the only guarantee to realise the aspiration of the Muslim peoples. Therefore, let us each, within our spheres, and within our countries, work towards this great and noble objective.

May Allah guide our actions.

وَإِنَّ هَٰذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ

(سورة المؤمنون : آية ٥٢)